
DIGEST

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Katrina Jackson

HB No. 660

Abstract: Requires BESE to adopt policies and procedures relative to school prayer and the pledge of allegiance and to develop a program of instruction relative to the pilgrim fathers and the U.S. flag. Provides for applicability in school districts subject to voter approval.

Proposed law requires the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to establish a policy and develop procedures to allow public school students to participate in the recitation of the Lord's Prayer and the "Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag" at the commencement of each school day. Such policy and procedures shall include but not be limited to provisions for the following:

- (1) Student participation in the recitation of the prayer and pledge shall be voluntary.
- (2) Students shall be reminded that the Lord's Prayer is the prayer that the pilgrim fathers recited when they came to America in search for freedom.
- (3) Students shall be informed that these exercises are not meant to influence an individual's personal religious beliefs in any manner.
- (4) The recitations shall be conducted so that students learn of America's great freedoms, including the freedom of religion symbolized by the recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

Requires BESE to develop a program of instruction for public schools with regard to the pilgrim fathers and a program with regard to the flag of the United States of America, the latter to include instruction in etiquette, the correct use and display of the flag, and other patriotic exercises as may be related.

Permits local school boards to purchase or otherwise acquire and provide for display in each classroom copies of the Declaration of Independence, the Gettysburg Address, and other documents the local board deems significant to the history of Louisiana and the U.S.

Provides that proposed law shall apply only to public schools located in a school district where the matters proposed in proposed law have been approved by at least 2/3 of the qualified electors voting on the proposition in the district. Authorizes school boards to provide for putting a proposition on the ballot containing the matters proposed in proposed law. Provides that upon such approval, the local superintendent of the school district shall provide notification and verification of such approval to BESE.

(Adds R.S. 17:2118)